

# SKEPTICS UFO NEWSLETTER

By Phillip J. Klass

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Sept. 1990

SUN #5

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## ED WALTERS CHANGES HIS UFO TALE, AGAIN:

When Gulf Breeze's world-famous UFO photographer appeared on the "OPRAH" TV talk-show on Sept. 7, he contradicted what he had written in his own book and denied he had ever claimed to have been abducted. When I urged Walters to re-read his own book, he replied: "I have never, quote, read my lips, I've never said that I've been abducted." On page 261 of the Walters' book, the chapter dealing with alleged events of May 1, 1988, begins: "When I was 41 years old, I photographed a UFO and was abducted."

On page 311, in the chapter written by Ed's good friend and "endorser" Bruce Maccabee, Bruce wrote: "Ed was abducted on Dec. 17, 1987, and again on May 1, 1988." The Dec. 17, "abduction" "emerged" only after Bob Oechsler (another Walters endorser) discovered that the 4th in a series of five UFO photos (#16) that Ed claimed he took in quick succession on the night of Dec. 17 actually came from a Polaroid film pack manufactured in a different month than the other four UFO photos.

When Walters was informed of this discrepancy, he promptly visited his friendly hypnotist. Under hypnosis, Ed (allegedly) recalled being zapped by a "white flash" which seemingly transported him into the UFO where he lost the "real photo #16." When he returned, his wife was there waiting with a new pack of film which Ed promptly loaded in his camera. This was used to shoot one more UFO picture which Ed thought was photo #16 because neither he nor his wife Frances remembered this until Oechsler later discovered the photo #16 discrepancy. In Ed's original account of the Dec. 17 incident to MUFON investigators, there was no mention that Frances was even present.

Both Maccabee and Oechsler accepted this explanation. Now that Ed has denied Maccabee's and his own published claim of "UFO-abduction," how will they explain the different film pack?

## "UFO-PORT" DISCOVERED NEAR GULF BREEZE:

First broad-daylight photo of an Ed Walters type UFO (with portholes and topside "dome") was photographed on Santa Rosa Island, only a few miles southeast of Gulf Breeze during my brief visit on Aug. 19.

UFO-Port owner Joe Bulshitski (a pseudonym), reports that UFOs first began to land atop his house in early May, 1988. This is shortly after UFOs stopped visiting Ed Walters' "old" house (where small UFO



model was later discovered.) JB said ETs offered no explanation for why they stopped visiting Walters. But recalling that Budd Hopkins claims ETs are involved in a cross-breeding experiment, JB said: "Perhaps Ed fell short of their needs."

Bulshitski said it's no secret why the ETs come so often to Gulf Breeze. "They love our beautiful white-sand beaches. There are no oceans on their planet--only muddy rivers." JB explained why the UFO's curtain's were drawn when our photo was taken: "They sleep during the day and visit our beaches only late at night to avoid attracting attention. They don't wear bathing suits and have unusually shaped sex organs."

As an expression of appreciation to JB for the use of his rooftop, the ETs gave him a model of their craft. It was made from plastic picnic plates, similar to the one found in Ed Walters' old house.

Ed Walters charges that the UFO-model found in his former house is "a hoax, planted (by 'debunkers') to discredit the local sightings." Ed admits that the UFO-model's midsection--which has dark rectangular window-like areas made with India ink and diamond-shaped areas with small holes to allow light to emerge--is made from a piece of drafting paper which Walters used to make a house-plan.

But Walters claims he did not make the house plan drawing used in the model until Sept. 6-7, 1989, nearly two years after his first UFO photos surfaced. Ed claims the drawing in the model was made for Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Thomas and that he discarded the original "a week or so later." Yet according to Mr. Thomas, it was not until three weeks later (Sept. 29) that he notified Walters that he and his wife preferred to buy an already-built Walters house rather than have him build a new one. Would Walters discard the house plan before hearing from Thomas??

Walters claims that "debunkers" obtained the house plan from his garbage and used it to construct the model, then hid it in the attic before the new owners moved in Nov. 1989. Ed claims the debunkers constructed the model from his sketch of the UFO published in the March, 1988, issue of the MUFON UFO Journal.

Examination of the UFO-model challenges Ed Walters' claims and explains why the illuminated "dome" atop the object in some of the early Walters photos was at a slightly skewed angle, i.e. not vertical. If "debunkers" had patterned the model after Ed's sketch, they should have made this dome vertical.

The UFO-model's "dome" is a several-inch long plastic tube--resembling those used to protect an expensive cigar. The tube extends through a hole in the top of the plastic picnic plate. Because it is supported only by friction from the surrounding plastic as the model is handled--even gently--the weight of the plastic tube inside the model can shift position slightly. This

causes the UFO's dome to tilt slightly--as appears in some, but not all, of Ed's early UFO photos. (See top arrow, top photo.)

If the UFO-model was made in late 1989 by a debunker, he/she might logically put the dark window-like rectangles and diamond-shaped portholes completely around the model's midsection. Yet the model found in Walters' former house is blank on the backside.

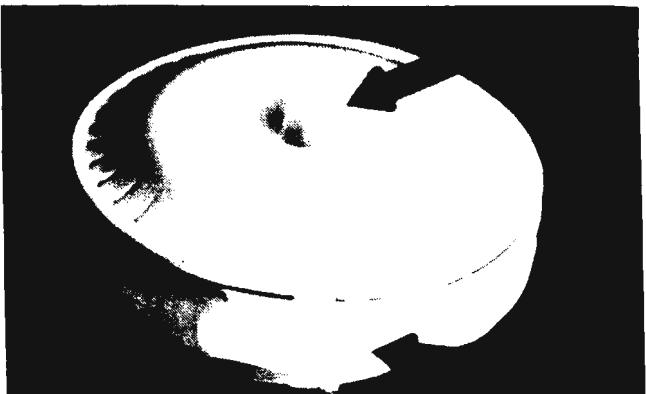
The reason became clear in June, 1990, when Walters' (former) young friend Tom Smith Jr. came forward to describe how Ed used a flashlight feeding into a black plastic pipe attached to the backside of a model to illuminate it. If black "widows" and diamond-shaped "portholes" had been drawn on the backside, they might cast shadows on the front of the model.

When recent photos of the model (r.) are compared with those taken shortly after the model was found, one can observe how very crinkled and deformed the mid-section of the model has become as a result of its being handled and examined by many persons. (See arrows). The paper's composition, which gives it the ruggedness needed for drafting purposes, makes it susceptible to permanent crinkling.

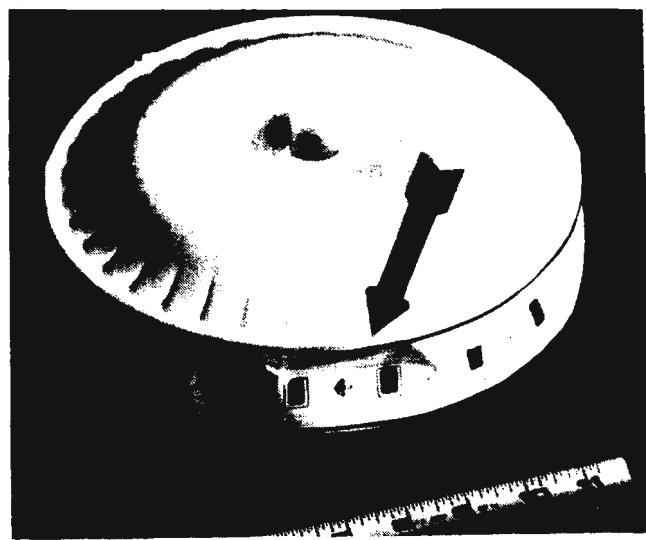
If, as Ed claims, he had thrown this house plan out as trash, it would have been "squeezed" together in a trash bag with other garbage. As a result, it would have been far too crinkled and wrinkled to be used to construct a UFO-model. First photos of the model shortly after it was discovered do not show a widespread crinkled deformation which is now so evident.

Walters' claim that the UFO-model had been planted by "debunkers" recently was challenged by a reporter who posed the following question: Why would a debunker hide the model in the cramped attic over the garage where it would never have been found if the new owner had not been searching for the master-valve to temporarily shut off the water. How could a debunker be sure that the new residents would go up into the cramped, relatively inaccessible attic and look under the insulation?

Ed offered the following explanation:



Note skewed top dome (arrow)



Drafting paper is easily deformed

When Walters lived there, he had a refrigerator with an automatic ice-maker which was connected to the house's water supply via a small copper tube. Walters claims the tube contained its own small shutoff valve which he says was turned off and left behind when he moved out in late 1988.

To assure that the next resident would discover the model hidden in the attic, Walters claims debunkers broke off and removed the small valve, then squooshed the copper tube closed with pliers. IF the new owners had a refrigerator with automatic ice-maker, they would need to locate the house's master water valve to shut off the water before "un-squooshing" the copper tubing and connecting it to the refrigerator's ice-maker, according to Walters. But if the new owners' refrigerator did not have an automatic ice-maker, clearly the UFO-model would never be discovered.

If the new owners did have an ice-maker refri, the easiest way to locate the master-valve would be to call the previous resident--Ed Walters. He would have told the new owners (whom I'll call Mr./Mrs. RM to protect their privacy) that the master-valve to shut off the water was located outside the house--and the UFO-model would never have been discovered.

When Mr./Mrs. RM moved into the house on Nov. 1, 1989, they did buy a new refrigerator with automatic ice-maker. If Mr. RM had opted to pay the dealer to connect up the ice-maker, the UFO-model would never have been discovered. Instead, Mr. RM decided he would connect it up himself to save installation cost. But it was not until several months later, in late March, 1990, that RM found time to do so.

By this time, RM had experienced some problems with the air conditioning system which had prompted him to call Ed Walters for help. Thus, in late March when RM decided to connect up the ice-maker, he told me that he "hesitated to bother Ed Walters again." But for RM's several month delay in connecting up the ice-maker, and the intervening air conditioning system problems, he would have called Walters first--and the UFO-model would never have been discovered.

RM's decision to try to find the master-valve himself led him into the cramped attic to trace the water pipes. In the process he discovered the UFO-model covered with insulation--but he did not locate the master-valve. Only then did RM finally call Walters. Being a newcomer to Gulf Breeze who was unfamiliar with Ed's UFO photos, RM did not mention the UFO-model he had discovered.

If RM had told Ed about the UFO-model, would Walters have have urged that it be made public to demonstrate how far the debunkers would go to discredit him? Or would Ed have used the same argument to get RM to destroy the model and keep its discovery secret??

# Los Angeles Times

# Book Review

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1990

## Unidentified Flying Hypothesis

### OUT THERE

The Government's Secret Quest for Extraterrestrials  
by Howard Blum  
(Simon & Schuster:  
\$19.95; 288 pp.)

Reviewed by Philip J. Klass

**T**his is a true story," former New York Times reporter Howard Blum assures his readers in the opening page of this book. "I verified every name, every incident, date and conversation."

The publisher's blurb on the

Klass, senior avionics editor for Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine for nearly 35 years and now a contributing editor, is a skeptical UFO investigator. He has authored four books on the subject, including "UFOs: The Public Deceived" (Prometheus Books).

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Furthermore, the system does not provide a "real-time" display at Space Command's center, which Blum claims Mondran was viewing.

Blum's dramatic scenario of events alleged to have triggered the Pentagon's renewed interest in UFOs is riddled with errors. For example, he reports that Cmdr. Mondran, after parking her car outside Cheyenne Mountain, rode a military bus inside and "took a polished steel elevator . . . descending almost 2500 ft." There is no such elevator—as I know from my several visits to the underground center. The only elevator is a three-story freight elevator.

The military bus would have delivered Cmdr. Mondran to the

review copy characterizes the book as a "startling exposé that reads with the dramatic narrative drive of a novel but . . . it is absolutely true!"

The cornerstone of Blum's book is his claim that in early 1987, the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) secretly launched a new investigation into UFOs—unidentified flying objects. Approximately 18 years earlier, the Pentagon had announced it was closing down the U.S. Air Force's investigatory effort after two decades because it had found no evidence that any UFOs were either extraterrestrial or Soviet craft.

Blum, whose earlier books include one on the Walker spy family, claims that the Pentagon's new interest in UFOs was triggered by an extraordinary incident that occurred shortly before Christmas, 1986. It allegedly involved the Navy Space Surveillance System (NSSS), a key element in the global Space Surveillance Network operated by the U.S. Space Command.

"ground floor" of the command center inside Cheyenne Mountain. She would have walked up one flight of stairs to the Space Defense Center, which is on the second floor, not the third floor as Blum reports. (Blum claims he called Space Command to ask which floor it was on, as an example of his meticulous research.)

In response to my request to Space Command's public-affairs office, Maj. Tom Niemann told me he could find no record that a Cmdr. Sheila Mondran had been stationed there. When he checked with the Navy, Niemann told me, they could not find any record of an officer named Sheila Mondran.

The NSSS is an "electronic fence" that stretches across our Southern states from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. It was built in the late 1950s, following the launch of the first Soviet satellites, to enable Washington to maintain a running inventory of all objects in space—both satellites and space debris—that pass over the United States.

As Blum describes the incident, Navy Cmdr. Sheila Mondran was on duty in Space Command's underground command center, deep inside Cheyenne Mountain near Colorado Springs, when a computer display showed a strange, uncatalogued space object passing through the electronic fence. According to Blum, the object was performing "crash dives followed by sudden climbs at astonishing speeds."

Had Blum checked, he would have discovered that the Navy's electronic fence could not possibly have detected such maneuvers—as I earlier learned when I wrote a technical article on the system.

Blum describes experiments allegedly conducted by the DIA using "remote viewers" ("psychics") who, he claims, demonstrated the ability to "see," and thus pinpoint, the location of submerged Soviet and U.S. submarines. When the DIA learned of the extraordinary UFO incident, Blum claims, it brought in three psychics to "see" retroactively what the object looked like when it penetrated the electronic fence 48 hours earlier.

All three of the psychics drew sketches of "rounded, wingless aircraft," Blum tells his readers. Armed with these sketches of flying saucers, Army Col. Harold E.

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## 'Out There'

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Phillips, a DIA intelligence analyst with a long-time interest in UFOs, according to Blum, managed to convince his agency that "the time had at last come to convene a top-secret working group to investigate the possibility that extraterrestrials were making contact with this planet."

Although Blum claims to have talked briefly with Col. Phillips by telephone, the only officer with that name who shows up in Army records is a lieutenant colonel (not a full colonel), and he retired three years before the purported UFO group was formed. Pentagon telephone directories for 1987-88 show an "H. E. Phillips," but he is a Navy commander, not an Army colonel. To avoid any possibility of Pentagon "disinformation," I checked the University of Southern Illinois, in Carbondale, from which Blum says Phillips graduated with a degree in engineering. The university could not find any record of a Harold E.

Phillips.

According to Blum, the most vexing problem that confronted Phillips, as chief of the UFO Working Group, was to find a "highly promising" UFO report for the panel to investigate. Blum writes: "For a time, the colonel was convinced he had found his investigative target in Gulf Breeze, Florida. The sightings in this Southern town were shared by a variety of witnesses, and there was even a blurred film of what many responsible observers swore was a UFO. It turned out the Air Force was testing a classified low-flying surveillance plane in the area."

This explanation is seriously flawed. The object that appeared on the Polaroid prints of Floridian Ed Walters was saucer-shaped with illuminated portholes—hardly an appropriate design for a "low-flying surveillance plane." This explanation also is ruled out if one accepts Walters' claim that he saw four-foot-high creatures being "beamed-down" from the UFO.

There was slight blurring of the background in a few of Walters' photos, due to camera motion during the one-second time-exposure used for the night photos, but the image of the UFO was not blurred. This logically prompted even some long-time "UFO believers" to conclude that the photos were hoax double-exposures made with a small model. Recently, a small model flying saucer similar to the UFO in the Walters photos was discovered hidden in the attic of the house in which he lived when he took his UFO photos.

Next, according to Blum, Col. Phillips' interest focused on reports of night sightings of a giant UFO reported by many observers in Hudson Valley communities north of New York City. "But then, just when Col. Phillips was on the verge of recommending that the Working Group dispatch a photographic team" to the area, according to Blum, he received a newspaper report that the giant UFO was nothing more than a group of small-aircraft pilots engaged in a

prank. More than three years earlier, this hoax had been reported by Discover magazine in the cover story of its November, 1984, issue.

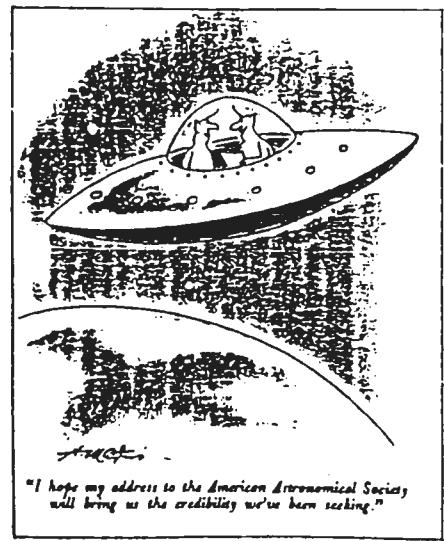
Phillips finally discovered a "perfect candidate" for the UFO Working Group to investigate: Elmwood, a small town in central Wisconsin. Elmwood's citizens often report seeing UFOs, and its mayor had announced plans to build a \$50 million UFO landing site. Blum claims Phillips sent two covert agents to Elmwood, which prompted Blum's own visit. He arrived in time for Elmwood's annual "UFO Days" festival and devoted about one-sixth of his book to his interviews with local citizens.

Eventually, writes Blum, Col. Phillips learned of the "Top Secret MJ-12 papers," made public by three UFOlogists in the spring of 1987, which claim that the U.S. government recovered a crashed saucer and several extraterrestrial bodies about 40 years earlier. If the MJ-12 claims were true, clearly somebody forgot to brief the top

DIA officials who had approved creation of the UFO Working Group. Blum provides an even-handed pro/con treatment, indicating he himself is unsure whether they are authentic.

I appear in Blum's book as the person whose research indicates that the MJ-12 papers are counterfeit. Blum offers a not-unflattering summary of my career as a technical journalist and skeptical UFO investigator. I was rather surprised at his reference to my "jaunty, pencil-thin figure," because we never have met and I have been 10 pounds overweight for 30 years. (We did talk by telephone on several occasions.) I counted 24 other factual errors in the five pages in which Blum highlights my career.

During my Jan. 20, 1989, telephone conversation with Blum, he admitted: "All I have now is a nice weird story and you can poke a thousand holes in it." That aptly summarizes the tale he tells in "Out There," which could more accurately be titled "Spaced Out." ■



"I hope my address to the American Astronomical Society will bring us the credibility we've been seeking."

From the April 23, 1990 New Yorker.

It will be interesting to see how the leaders of the UFO Movement react to Blum's new book. At least some will claim that Blum's book supports their charge of "government UFO coverup." Yet if Blum's basic claims were true, they would show that the U.S. government has not been withholding knowledge or evidence of ET visitors for more than 40 years, as so often claimed.

Logically, those like William L. Moore, Stanton Friedman, Kevin Randle and Don Schmitt (CUFOS director of special investigations), and Jerry Clark (editor of CUFOS' International UFO Reporter), who claim that the government recovered one, or more, crashed flying saucers and ET bodies in New Mexico in the late 1940s should dismiss Blum's book as nonsense.

But never underestimate the illogic and gullibility of some leading "UFO-Promoters" [UFOPs]. Some will argue that the crashed saucer/alien bodies are so covert that even top CIA and military officials, including those in the Defense Intelligence Agency, are not privy to the "secret" known to thousands of persons who read "The Roswell Incident" and tens of millions of TV viewers who saw "UFO Coverup--Live" in the fall of 1988, or "Unexplained Mysteries" a year later.

Logically it should be difficult for MUFON officials, like Walt Andrus, Jr., to endorse Blum's book. Unlike Andrus, who has publicly endorsed the Ed Walters/Gulf Breeze case as "one of the most important in the past 40 years," Blum's alleged "UFO Working Group" concluded it was not worth an on-site investigation, and not as significant as numerous UFO reports from Elmwood, Wisc.

Most likely, UFOPs will straddle the fence, as does the latest issue of UFO magazine (Vol. 5, No. 5), in an interview with Blum. When he was asked: "What's your gut-level feeling about MJ-12," Blum replied: "I would think the documents are genuine government documents, but they're not true...I think they are part of a very specific government disinformation campaign."

But when Blum and I talked by telephone on Jan. 20, 1989, he said: "We both agree that the Moore, the MJ-12 stuff, it's obviously phoney... What's fascinating to me is that these guys [promoting it as authentic] are such interesting hucksters."

In Chapter 7 of Blum's book, he claims to have made "a trip to [Project Blue Book's] former offices at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio." Blum claims that the "headquarters of Project Blue Book had been lovingly preserved. It was a small, gray room cluttered with empty desks...against one battleship gray wall there was an impressive line of filing cabinets. Hundreds of drawers." (Emphasis added.)

If "hundreds of drawers" means at least 200 drawers--assuming 5-drawers per file cabinet--the "line of filing cabinets" would have extended for at least 50 feet. How could Blum describe this as a "small" office?

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